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ABSTRACT

It can be said that U.S. immigration started in 1607, when the first settlers joined the original colonists on the shores of the United States. Since then, people of every nation, ethnicity, and class have come to the United States, looking for freedom, prosperity, and stability. While originally immigrants flowed freely into the United States, over time many second- and third-generation U.S. people began to object to new arrivals competing for the same jobs and living quarters. This resentment influenced legislation on immigration and quotas, and created a hostile environment for people searching for the same dreams as those of the parents and grandparents of established immigrants. While the issue is complex, immigration has always been a major influence on the United States, and even today, the country continues to be the land of opportunity for people from around the world. This book provides hundreds of firsthand accounts of the period (from diary entries, letters, speeches, and newspaper articles) that illustrate how historical events appeared to those who lived through them. Among the eyewitness testimonies included are those of Powhatan, William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Cabot Lodge, Emma Lazarus, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Albert Einstein, and John F. Kennedy. In addition to firsthand accounts, each of the nine chapters provides an introductory essay and a chronology of events. The book also includes critical documents such as the Alien and Sedition Acts, the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Johnson-Reed Act, and the McCarran-Walter Act as well as capsule biographies of 95 key figures, a bibliography, an index, nine maps and graphs, and 95+ photographs. (BT)

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